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These Are The Hardys

By Nicholas Russell Murray

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Origins Of The Family

The Hardy family is a very old one in this country. It is, of course, a very much older one in England. "It was around the year 1360 that two young Norman gentlemen, brothers, of the landed family LeHardi or LeHardy, gathered together their portable effects and sailed across the 24-mile strait that separates the Island of Jersey from the French coast. What force it was that impelled them to leave their lovely Normandy and to migrate to the lonely Channel Isle, only 41 miles in area, it is difficult to determine at this date. Behind them, in the Duchy, they left some property and possessions, which were subsequently lost to their descendants by reason of their steady allegiance to the English crown in the wars and tumults which followed.

"The French branch of the family continued to flourish without them. Two centuries later the poetry in the Hardy blood seems to have flowered forth in Paris, where one Alexander Hardy, author of 600 plays, won the unofficial title of Father of French Tragi-Comedy.

"Of the two immigrant LeHardy's, only one managed to make his mark in the world—if having one's name preserved in historical records can properly be called making one's mark. This was Clement LeHardy. He had married a sister of one Sir William Lagague, who brought him a dowry of a 'corn rent of one quarter.' He retained his ancestral Norman coat of arms and founded the central line of Jersey Hardys, which still flourishes today. He was made a magistrate of the island in 1831. (This office passed from father to son.)"

The above information is taken from the *LIFE OF THOMAS HARDY*, by Thomas Brennecke. He goes on to relate that Clement LeHardy, greatgrandson of the first Clement, sheltered Henry, Earl of Richmond, on the island of Jersey, following the latter's unsuccessful attempt to capture the English throne from Richard III in 1483. When Henry did succeed in gaining the crown, he made Clement lieutenant-governor of the island in gratitude for his services. Clement's son John went to the mainland of England and settled in the valley of the Frome river. He was the first of the Dorset or Wessex Hardys. From him stems a long line of naval heroes, the most notable being Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy, who was second in command to Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Also from him descended Thomas Hardy, famous English novelist and poet, who died in 1928. the subject of Brennecke's biography The author concludes his sketch of his subject's ancestry by saying: "The Hardys have always been, and still are, a class apart from what W. S. Gilbert called 'the common country folk of an insipid neighborhood.' "

Practically all Hardys in the Southern United States are descended from one of two Johns—one of whom settled in Virginia

before 1666. the other in North Carolina in 1695. The connection between these two Johns has not been established. It may be that the North Carolina John was a son or grandson of the Virginia John, and may have lived in Virginia before coming to North Carolina. Most of the early settlers in North Carolina did come from Virginia. At any rate, the two families have shown many of the same characteristics, followed much the same pattern in their migrations southward and westward, and may be considered for our purposes as one.

General Douglas MacArthur

The most distinguished Hardy descendent living today is undoubtedly General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. No one who reads these words will need to have the career of General MacArthur recounted for him, nor, regardless of his opinions in the controversy which has recently surrounded the man, will he dispute the rank of MacArthur as one of the great Americans of our day, and one of the great American soldiers of all time. It may be news to many of our blood, however, that the general's mother was Mary Pinckney Hardy, daughter of Thomas Asbury Hardy and Elizabeth Margaret Pierce, his wife, of Norfolk, Virginia.

According to the notes of the late Mrs. Elizabeth Hardy Jones, the general's grandfather was born in North Carolina on March 5, 1800, and went to Virginia when he was 29 years old. He engaged in business there with his two brothers, and on August 4, 1831, he married Miss Pierce. They became the parents of fourteen children, of which the general's mother (known to her family as "Pinky") was third from the youngest.

In the winter of 1874-75, Miss Hardy visited in New Orleans, where she met Arthur MacArthur, a Federal army officer. It was a case of love at first sight. Her family bitterly opposed the marriage to a Yankee soldier—four of her brothers had fought for the South—and refused to attend the wedding. However, the couple proved ideally suited for each other, and each contributed qualities which went into the making of the illustrious figure their son was to become.

"No estimate of MacArthur's character can be made without a complete study of Mary MacArthur," said a Collier's magazine article in 1950. "For with her lay the seed of leadership, which was finally implanted in her son. With her, too, was the pride of family which MacArthur was never allowed to forget."

Two of Mary Pinckney's cousins, Dr. Lemuel D. Hardy and Mrs. Margaret Hardy Denby, were still living in Norfolk, Va., a few years ago. Here is what Mrs. Denby said of her famous relative: "We are very proud of Douglas MacArthur and of what he is doing for his country. But he is only doing what we in the family would expect him to do. Our folks have fought gallantly in every war, when our homes and loved ones were endangered."

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Farther on in this sketch, we will see how true this is of our own branch of the Hardy family.

Was Thomas, the grandfather of Douglas MacArthur, who left North Carolina for Virginia in 1829, related to Andrew, our ancestor, who left North Carolina for Alabama and Mississippi in 1820? I do not know as yet; but it seems quite probable that they were near kin. The name of Thomas was in Andrew's family, as will appear. In fact, I believe that Andrew's father was probably named Thomas, and the Thomas who went to Virginia could well have been Andrew's brother or nephew. Also the name of Pinckney appears among Andrew's grandchildren. I hope to have some definite information on this point in the future. Meanwhile, we may continue to count Douglas MacArthur as one who has done honor to the Hardy blood, through whatever channels it has flowed.

William Harris Hardy

Of William Harris Hardy—judge, Confederate soldier, railroad builder, founder of the cities of Gulfport and Hattiesburg, and Christian gentleman—it has been said that “he has probably done more than any other Mississippian in the development of his state—unquestionably, South Mississippi.”

The story of his career has been well told by his son, Toney A. Hardy, in his book, “No Compromise With Principle,” which phrase the author feels expresses the dominant trait of his father's character.

William H. Harry was born on a farm near Montgomery, Alabama, on February 12, 1837, and died at Gulfport, February 17, 1917. He was the son of Robert William Hardy and Temperance Toney, and a lineal descendant of the John who came to Virginia about 1665. He entered Cumberland University in Tennessee, but was forced to drop out of school by a severe illness. In order to recover his health, he rode from his home in Alabama on horseback to Montrose, Mississippi, where he remained as a teacher. He later studied law and rose to eminence in his profession. He raised a company of troops in the War Between the States and served throughout the war; following which he played a leading part in the struggle during Reconstruction years to restore representative government to Mississippi. Quoting Toney Hardy's book, above mentioned:

“The outstanding accomplishment of his life from the popular viewpoint undoubtedly was the building of the New Orleans and Northeastern Railroad from Meridian to New Orleans. This road was of his conception. He raised the funds in New York for its construction and guided it to completion. It traversed a sparsely settled region—a wilderness of pine—of small value because of lack of transportation. The road, however, opened up for commerce and development a vast area of the southern part of the

state, embracing roughly 25 per cent of the area of the state.

"He followed this by projecting the Gulf and Ship Island Railroad, in the process of which he named and laid out its terminus, the city of Gulfport. In addition to Gulfport, he founded Hattiesburg, which he named for his second wife, Hattie. The Mississippi Central Railroad and the Gulfport and Western Railroad were also planned by him."

Judge Hardy's memory is perpetuated by a bronze bust in a prominent location in Gulfport, presented by his son Lamar Hardy, a noted N. Y. lawyer. A proposal to name a Mississippi county in his honor was passed by the State Legislature, but was vetoed by Governor Anselm McLaughlin because Judge Hardy had opposed him on a bill regarding a new state capitol.

Other Notable Hardys

There are numerous other Hardy's and Hardy descendants whose attainments have been such as to warrant more extended mention than I can give them here. I shall only mention a few who have gained prominence in Louisiana and Mississippi.

One in particular who deserves attention from the standpoint of service to Mississippi is John Crumpton Hardy, son of John D. Hardy, who was born in Newton County in 1864 and died in Texas in 1939. He was president of Mississippi A. & M. College from 1900 to 1912, and contributed much to the development of that splendid institution, now known as Mississippi State College. Later he was president of Baylor College for Women at Belton, Texas.

George W. Hardy, Jr. born in 1900, is a former Mayor of Shreveport and is now a Judge of the Court of Appeals in Louisiana. He is also a descendant of the famous Revolutionary General, "Mad Anthony" Wayne, whose daughter Susannah married Jack, one of the Virginia Hardys, and one of the earliest settlers in the Territory of Mississippi.

John Collin (Captain Jack) Hardy, born in Scott County in 1853, was one of the pioneers of Brookhaven, Miss. His fine old brick home is still occupied by members of his family, and is one of the landmarks of that thriving little South Mississippi city.

A family of Hardys, originally from North Carolina, has long been prominent in Central Louisiana, and was written up in The LOUISIANA GENEALOGICAL REGISTER in 1947. One member of this family, E. S. Hardy, is the present Mayor of LeCompte. But is now time to get on with the account of our own branch—namely Andrew and Sarah and their descendants.

Andrew And Sarah Hardy

Actually we know surprisingly little about our first definitely established Hardy ancestor. His family Bible is still in existence,

in the possession of a great grandson, W. E. Meeks of Topeka, Kansas. Unfortunately, though it gives us the names and birth-dates of all his children, it tells us nothing about Andrew himself.

The 1850 census of Kemper County, Miss., shows him there in that year as a 60-year-old farmer, born in North Carolina. This would make him born in 1790; but as the ages given for the other members of the family are all wrong, not much dependence can be placed on that. The same census shows him as unable to read or write; which is no discredit, as many of the most respected citizens of that day grew up far from any school and had no educational advantages whatever. We do not know of what county in North Carolina Andrew was native, nor the names of his parents. From the fact that he named his first daughter Rachel and his second son Thomas—names not found among his wife's near relatives—I have a theory that he was a son of Thomas and Rachel Hardy. There was a Rachel Hardy living alone in Chowan County, in the 1790 North Carolina census; a Thomas, Sr., and Thomas, Jr., both with families, in Pitt County; an Andrew, with a family, in Brunswick (this would be too early for our Andrew); and several Hardys of assorted first names, in Edgecombe, where Andrew's wife came from.

Anyway, Andrew married Sarah Barnes, of whom more presently, about 1808 or 1809. They moved to Perry County, Alabama, about 1820, thence to Noxubee County, Miss., in 1833. The 1840 census shows Andrew in Noxubee County, owning four slaves. By 1850 he was in Kemper County, where he died, probably not long after that year. His name does not appear on the rolls of the West Kemper Baptist church, founded in 1850, of which his wife and other members of the family were members.

Sarah Barnes Hardy, wife of Andrew, was also born in North Carolina, about 1790 by the census records; was a charter member of the West Kemper church at Moscow; moved after her husband's death to Neshoba County, and died there in May, 1877 or '78. During the later years of her life she was blind. For her family background, we might do well to stop here and go back to another group of ancestors.

The Barnes Family

Edward Barnes, great-grandfather of Sarah, was a planter in Edgecombe County, N. C., as far back as 1726—though Edgecombe County as such did not exist at that time. Edward's will dated December 15, 1760, mentions his wife Sarah, sons Nathan, William, Jacob, and several daughters.

Nathan, the son of Edward, had two sons, Absalom and Aziel, to each of whom he deeded some land in 1775. Absalom's share was 400 acres "on the south side of White Oak Swamp" in Edgecombe County.

Absalom Barnes was a lieutenant in the Revolution. On No-

vember 24, 1773, Lt. Col. Jonas Johnston wrote to Governor Caswell of North Carolina from Edgecome County: "I have herewith sent you the Commissions of Capt. Davis and Ensign Gay, resigned; the former through infirmity, the latter for cowardice, and as no ensign offers to supply the place of Gay, our detachment is without a captain. Lee who now heads the company is a volunteer, who accepted of the office in the room of Davis resigned, and as I have no blank commissions he is without one. Absolum Barnes, our Lieutenant, has a commission. I am sorry to inform your excellency of so many resignations at present, but it is out of my power to help it." (State Records of North Carolina, Vol XIII, page 298.)

This record, scanty as it is, tells us several things about our ancestor, Absolum Barnes. He was a man who enjoyed the respect of his neighbors, since at that time the members of a company elected their own officers; he was no coward; and he was not a quitter nor one easily discouraged, since he stuck to his job in spite of the resignations of his fellow officers. Another point to be noted is the spelling of the given name, "Absolum." This is the same spelling as used in the Bible recording of the birth of his grandson, ABSOLUM Hardy. I do not recall ever seeing this particular spelling anywhere else. In this paper, I am using the conventional Biblical spelling of ABSALOM.

The first United States census, taken in 1790, shows Absalom Barnes still in Edgecombe county: with a family consisting of one male over 16 (himself), two males under 16, and four females. One of those females was, unless I am greatly mistaken, a baby girl just a few months old, named Sarah.

Two years later, Absolom in turn felt his end drawing near and as old Edward had done, made his will. In it he left his son Noah Barnes his "land east of Great Branch"; his son Jacob "the plantation on which I now live"; and to his wife Martha "the remainder I lend during her widowhood and after her death to be equally divided between all my children."

Miss Sybil Hyatt of Kingston, N. C. is the authority for all the above Barnes data, except for the letter from Col. Johnston.

Children Of Andrew And Sarah

The Family Bible in the possession of W. E. Meeks lists the children of Andrew and Sarah as follows:

1. Rachel Hardy, the daughter of Andrew Hardy and Sarah his wife was born November 7, 1809.
2. Noah Hardy was born August 25, 1812.
3. Thomas Hardy was born July 25, 1814.
4. Absolum Hardy was born January 2, 1817.
5. Beeman Hardy was born July 3, 1819.
6. Martha Hardy was born December 4, 1821.
7. Mary Hardy was born August 20, 1825.

8. John Curtis Hardy was born February 17, 1829.
9. Andrew Jackson Hardy was born January 17, 1831.

Rachel Hardy Henry

Rachel, the eldest daughter of Andrew and Sarah, was born in North Carolina. She married Ben Henry, a native of Georgia, about the time the family came to Mississippi. They lived first in Noxubee County; moved to Kemper shortly after, where they were early members of the West Kemper church; and a few years later went to Sunflower county, Mis. No further record of the family has been found, and we have so far been unable to contact any of their descendants.

Children of Ben and Rachal Henry, with approximate dates of birth as shown by the 1850 census, were Sarah J. (1834), John W. (1837), Benjamin and Franklin twins, (1840), James R. (1841), Andrew (1846), Catherine (1848), Matilda (1849).

Noah Hardy

Noah, who was evidently named for his uncle, Noah Barnes, was also born in North Carolina. He was living in Noxubee county in 1860 with his wife, Elizabeth, and children listed as follows, with ages indicating dates of birth as shown: Martha A. (1841), William F. (1842), B. F. (1844), E. I. (a girl—1847), Jas. B. (1849), Mary B. (1851), Sallie (1854), N. H. (1865).

Ben Field Hardy, of Rayville, La., a grandson of Noah, writes concerning the above: "The Family Record you sent, I can't make out some of the names by the initials. Martha I never knew. William F. was wounded in the battle of Gettysburg and was captured and died in prison. I will tell you the names of the ones I knew. The girls were Letha, Alice, Mary—she was the one that was lost at Galveston (in the flood of 1901). James B. was J. P. Hardy's grandfather and the one you listed as N. H. should be M. H. That was my father." ,

Noah and his family moved to Richland parish, Louisiana, about 1868. He died there February 14, 1871. Many of his descendants are living in North Louisiana, and some have been present at previous reunions.

Thomas Hardy

Thomas was living in Noxubee county in 1845, with two males and four females in the family, according to the Mississippi tax rolls of that year. He is said to have moved to Louisiana. We have no further record.

Absalom Hardy

Absalom went from Noxubee county to Washington parish, La., where he was living in 1850 with his first wife, Cintha, daughter of Rev. James Thigpen, a Baptist preacher. He married, second, Sarah Conerly, daughter of John Conerly, and third, her cousin, Melissa Conerly, daughter of William Conerly and Eliza Cameron. In 1868 he moved to St. Helena parish near Greensburg, La., where he died August 29, 1873, of pneumonia contracted when trying to get his fodder in ahead of a rain. He served in the War Between the States. Records of the Pearl River Masonic Lodge show that he was a member from 1855 to 1869. A granddaughter, Mrs. John R. Thompson of Route 1, Amite, La., has his Bible. Names of children are given as shown therein

By first marriage:

1. Andrew J. born May 5, 1843.
2. James B., born Sept. 24, 1850.
3. Sarah Ann, born May 2, 1853; married Henry Dykes.
4. Catharin, born Sept. 16, 1855; married Henry Dykes, her brother-in-law, after the death of Sarah.

By second marriage:

5. Eliza Ann, born Aug. 24, 1858; married Seaborn Jenkins.
6. Absalom John, born Oct. 24, 1860; married (1) Annie Robinson, (2) Ella McCoy; living, Baton Rouge, La.
7. Stephen Conerly, born Nov. 19, 1863; married (1) Emma Bennett, (2) Mittie Young.

By third marriage:

8. Mary Melissa, born Sept. 16, 1869; married Loren Bennett; living Roseland, La.
9. Pinkney, born Dec. 12, 1870; d. Dec. 1873.
10. Delilah Ann, born April 2, 1872; married George P. Murray; living Shreveport, La.

Beman Barnes Hardy

Last of the family to be born in North Carolina, Beman accompanied his parents in their several moves, eventually to Kemper county where he spent most of his mature life. He was a deacon in the West Kemper church. He was married first to Frances Jane Bishop, December 22, 1841; she died in 1851 and he married, second, Mrs. Susan Crenshaw Bounds on September 8, 1853. He died on March 10, 1896, and is buried at West Kemper.

His children were as follows, according to the Bible in the possession of Mrs. H. L. Abercrombie of Mobile, Alabama.

By first marriage:

1. Andrew Jackson Hardy, born Oct. 2, 1842; married Margaret L. Reed.

2. Rachel Ann Hannah, born Jan. 24, 1845; married Charles A. Rideout; d. 1941.
3. Nancy Caroline, born Feb. 2, 1847; married Daniel T. Bounds.
4. Henry Bishop, born March 30, 1849; married Mary Wolf; d. Nov. 14, 1913, Floresville, Texas.
By second marriage.
5. William Jesse Hardy, born July 17, 1854; married (1) Martha Jane Land (2) Emma Mowdy; d. Sept. 29, 1940.
6. Sarah Elizabeth Hardy, born Jan. 18, 1856; married Hugh Ruthven.
7. George Thomas, born Feb. 11, 1858; married Nellie Abercrombie; d. March 6, 1942.
8. Cuzzy Jane, born April 17, 1860; married J. A. Mac Farland; living DeKalb, Miss.
9. Frances Lavinia, born Feb. 19, 1862; married Sid Massey; living Noxapater, Miss.
10. Noah Beman Barnes, born Feb. 29, 1864, married (1) Ida Perkins, (2) Mattie Smith.
11. Mary Susan, born June 17, 1866; d. Feb. 14, 1869.
12. Clara Agnes, born April 13, 1869; married Allen Evans; living Philadelphia, Miss.

Martha And Mary Hardy

Both Martha and Mary were born in Perry County, Alabama. Neither ever married. After the death of their parent, they made their home with their brother Andrew Jackson (Jack) in Neshoba County.

John Curtis Hardy

John Curtis, born in Alabama, stated in his application for a confederate pension in 1902 that he had lived in Mississippi for 69 years, that he enlisted in Kemper County in 1862, and that he was at that time a resident of Blinker in Neshoba county. His death occurred March 26, 1907. He married Mary D. Swearingen and they were the parents of nine children as follows:

1. Martha A., born Sept. 19, 1857; married _____ Meeks.
2. Thomas Absolom, born Nov. 1, 1858; married S. E. Strum; d. April 11, 1940.
3. William W., born Aug. 11, 1860; married Nancy Winsted; d. Nov. 7, 1928.
4. James J., born Sept. 3, 1862.
5. Sarah E., born July 1, 1865.
6. Lewis E., born Sept. 17, 1866.
7. John A., born Dec. 27, 1868.
8. Morgan Unicker, born Dec. 25, 1870.

9. Mary E., born Feb. 10, 1873; married James C. Moore; living Rt. 4, Philadelphia, Miss.

Andrew Jackson Hardy

It has been noted that the son who is named for his father is likely to be either the oldest or the youngest in the family. So it was with the Hardys. The youngest son was named Andrew; and since middle names had by that time become fashionable, "Jackson" was added, and the child became known as "Jack." Uncle Jack was a millwright by trade, and lived in Kemper and Neshoba counties. He married Elizabeth Jones and they were the parents of one daughter, Annie (1860-1938) who married Gaston Clark. The last surviving of Andrew and Sarah's children, Andrew Jackson died June 22, 1909, and is buried in the West Kemper cemetery.

A Beginning

This is no more than the verie t beginnings of a family history. Its purpose is to show that we do have a family in which we can take pride, and in which can be traced the characteristics of Hardihood, courage and adherence to principle which give the name of Hardy a meaning.

I have not attempted in this sketch, to carry the record of Andrew Hardy's descendants beyond his grandchildren. I have more or less complete records of a few branches down to the present, and should like very much to have them all, for inclusion in a much fuller record which I hope to have published in time for our next meeting. I would like to have, not only names and dates of all our people, but of what they did—how they succeeded in life, their war records if any, anything unusual about their lives or characters. Your cooperation will be appreciated, toward helping to complete a history which will be a valuable record for all time and a source of inspiration to ourselves and our children.

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